

# SDSTATE SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER

January 2018



## 10 Ways to be More Sustainable in 2018

New year. New semester. Great time to try something new. Right? As the campus Sustainability Specialist, it's not uncommon for people to ask me what they can do to be more sustainable. So, as we start this great new year, I thought I'd share 10 tips on how to have a more sustainable 2018.

**#1. Recycle.** Recycling is one of the easiest ways to practice sustainability. Recycling bins are located across campus with a color coding system where yellow bins are for trash and blue bins are for recycling. For information on what can and can't be recycled check out the [SDSU Recycling guide](#).

**#2. Turn the water off when you brush your teeth.** Running the water as you brush your teeth, wastes around 4 gallons of water. Over the course of one year, that adds up to 1,460 gallons, which is about the volume of 18 standard-sized bath tubs.

**#3. Ride your bike or walk to campus.** While this may not seem very appealing right now, it's a great habit to get into come spring. Not only does riding your bike or walking to work reduce pollution,

but it also makes you healthier and feel happier.

**#4. Buy less.** Reducing is by far the most sustainable action when it comes to waste. The fewer items you buy the fewer materials need to be made, the fewer resources we need to extract from the earth.

**#5. Ditch bottled water.** Besides the environmental benefits, using a reusable water bottle has economic benefits too. According to an article by the Office of Sustainability at Wake Forest University, "the average American is likely to spend \$588.00 on 168 bottles of water" in 1 year. A Nalgene water bottle at Walmart costs \$12. Water from SDSU water fountains and bottle re-fill stations is free.

**#6. Shop local.** Shopping local reduces the transportation needed to distribute goods which lowers pollution. It also supports your community and helps it have a viable economy.

**#7. Unplug electronics when not in use.** Did you know that many electronics still use energy even when they are turned off but are still plugged in? This is called vampire energy. Check out these

stats from a New York Times article. A plugged in, turned-off TV uses about 227 kilowatt-hours annually, and a computer plugged in 24/7/365 uses around 235 kilowatt-hours a year. Both of these are "more [energy] than the average person uses in an entire year in some developing countries."

**#8. Reusable ware.** Did you know that Aramark sells reusable cups, coffee-mugs, to-go containers, and bags? To-go boxes cost \$4.99; but when you use this box, you don't have to pay the \$0.50 for a disposable container. Thus, it only takes 10 uses for the to-go box to pay for itself! Using reusable ware helps reduce the amount of waste we generate on campus.

**#9. Wash your clothes in cold water.** According to an article in The Christian Science Monitor, washing your clothes in cold water uses 15x less energy than washing your clothes in hot water.

**#10. Print double-sided.** This reduces your paper usage in half! Briggs Library printers are set up to automatically print double-sided.

# Recycling Improvements across Campus!

It has been an exciting few months for recycling. The trial program of individual office recycling bins went so well that individual recycling bins are being placed in the majority of campus offices this spring. Ten outdoor recycling bins were placed on campus last week. Ink and toner cartridge recycling has started back up and is available for all students, faculty, and staff. All types of ink and toner cartridges are accepted. If that isn't enough excitement, just before Christmas SDSU was awarded the 2017 Coca-Cola/Keep America Beautiful Public Space Recycling Bin Grant. With the help of this grant, individual recycling bins will be coming to every dorm room this fall!



L to R: individual office recycling bin, outdoor recycling bin lid, ink and toner cartridge recycling bin in the Rotunda Breezeway, and dorm room recycling bin.

## What is Sustainability?

Recycling immediately comes to mind when people think of sustainability. In fact, it is often one of the first actions that leads to a more sustainable life. But, recycling isn't the only aspect of sustainability. Sustainability is much broader looking at the interdependence of three overlapping areas - society, economy, and environment. Let's look at what each of these areas mean.

Society, or social sustainability, is the act of ensuring all people are treated with equity and have access to basic human rights, including but not limited to: clean water, nutrition, education, healthcare, sanitation, shelter, security, a meaningful livelihood, and the opportunity to pursue their aspirations.

Economic sustainability is the act of distributing money and resources equally so that all may obtain basic human needs. Being economically sustainable should allow the economy to function, prosper, and thrive.

Finally, environmental sustainability is the act of preserving, restoring, and utilizing the earth's natural resources in a way that does not inhibit ecological services, remove resources faster than they can be replenished, or harm the surrounding environment.

When you put all three areas together, sustainability is the effort to form a better society through the interdependent actions of improving environmental quality, increasing economic prosperity, and instilling social justice for present and future generations.

Take a farmer as an example of sustainability. When the farmer grows nutritious food in a way that has minimal impact on the environment and sells the food so that it is not only available to all socio-economic levels, both physically and cost-wise, but also sold at a price that provides the farmer with a viable income, the farmer is practicing sustainability.

As recycling leads you towards a more sustainable life, consider the three pillars of sustainability and how they interact.



**Figure 1:** Sustainability is the intersection of economic, social, and environmental actions.

## Sustainability Tidbits

### Student Sustainability Council

Are you interested in getting involved with sustainability on campus? Join the Student Sustainability Council! This passionate group of students are educating campus about recycling, volunteerism, and general sustainability practices. All majors are welcome! **Contact:**

[Kory.Heier@jacks.sdstate.edu](mailto:Kory.Heier@jacks.sdstate.edu)

### Ink/Toner Cartridge Recycling Available!

Drop off locations at AME room 120, Daktronics room 157 and Rotunda Breezeway. This program is available for students, faculty, and staff.

### Spring Events

**Feb. 4<sup>th</sup> – March 31<sup>st</sup>:** RecycleMania

**March 24:** Earth Hour

**April 19<sup>th</sup>:** Spruce Up SDSU Day – Union Market – 5 p.m.

**April 21<sup>st</sup>:** City Earth Day Event – Good Roots Farm 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

**April 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Earth Day

**April 25<sup>th</sup>:** SDSU Arbor Day Event – University Arbor Day Park – Time TBD

### STARS Update

In 2015, SDSU earned a bronze rating in their sustainability efforts according to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education reporting process. When, SDSU re-submits their report in 2019, campus wants to earn a silver rating. Currently SDSU has 69 out of the 90 points SDSU needs to earn a silver.

### Get Involved

Follow SDState Sustainability on Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram @SustainSDState.

SDState Sustainability website.

[www.sdstate.edu/sustainability](http://www.sdstate.edu/sustainability)

Contact the Sustainability Specialist at 605-688-6821 or via [e-mail](mailto:).